

Executive Summary

Objectives: this report describes the knowledge, attitudes and behavior of young people regarding tobacco use, their exposure to environmental tobacco smoke (ETS), pro-tobacco as well as anti-tobacco advertisement.

Method: we conducted a multistage, school-based, two-cluster survey (n=2212, age=13-15 years) in government and private schools using a standardized questionnaire based on the Global Youth Tobacco Survey (GYTS).

Results: Smoking prevalence was 33.0% for boys and 23.4% for girls. One-third (33.6%) of never smokers and 45.8% of current smokers exposed to smoke from others in their home and more than 5 in 10 never smokers and almost 8 in 10 of current smokers exposed to smoke from others in public places. More than 50% of non-smokers and more than 57% of boys and girls saw a tobacco advertisement, and around 4.5 % of them were offered free cigarettes from a tobacco company representative. Moreover, almost 6 in 10 young people buy their cigarettes from stores, and 9 in ten were not refused to buy cigarettes because of their age.

Conclusion: One major problem in Macao that cannot be ignored is the increased use of cigarettes by young people, which will have long-term negative effects to the health care system in Macao. A small decline in smoking prevalence among youth could have a significant beneficial public health impact in reducing the number of adult smokers and consequently reducing morbidity and mortality caused by smoking related diseases in the future. Therefore, stronger intervention programs for community as well as adolescents and school-aged children should be established.